

# **BEEF JERKY**

## **INGREDIENTS**

about 3 pounds of meat (see instructions below)

2/3 cup Worcestershire sauce

2/3 cup soy sauce

1 teaspoon black pepper

1 teaspoon garlic powder

1 teaspoon onion powder

### **Options:**

1 teaspoon liquid smoke

2-3 teaspoons Tabasco sauce

2-3 teaspoons crushed red peppers

2-3 teaspoons sesame seeds

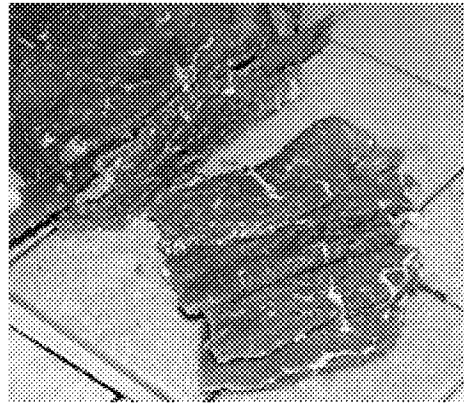
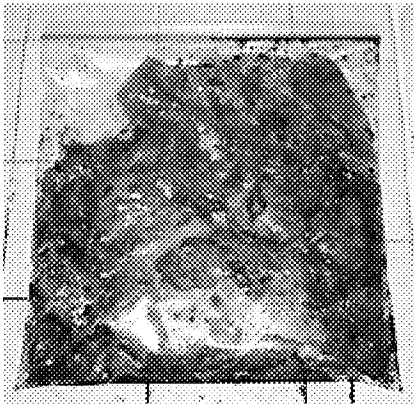
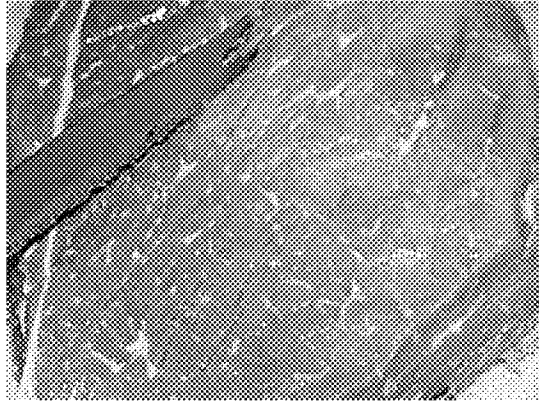
## **INSTRUCTIONS**

**The recipe above is enough for about 3 pounds of meat, which will dehydrate down to about 16-18 ounces (Yow! Now you know why it's so expensive to buy Beef Jerky.)**

While beef is what most people are familiar with, just about any firm meat can be made into jerky. If there are any hunters in your family, try venison. Turkey breast or firm fish such as salmon or ahi tuna also make excellent snacks. Simply slice your choice of meat thin (usually 1/8") with the grain (see photos). This is a bit more tricky with fish, so I highly recommend freezing it halfway first. In fact, partial freezing will make slicing all meats easier.

As for beef, my personal cut of choice is London Broil, although many people like to use brisket or flank steak as well.

**Note:** You can also use ground meats for jerky in which case you can forego the marinade and use a dry spice rub instead, see the instructions below.



Mix all marinade ingredients together in a large (gallon size or larger) plastic zipper bag. Add sliced meat and refrigerate, turning and mixing every hour or two. Hearty meats like beef and venison should be marinated overnight. For turkey, salmon or tuna, 3-4 hours is usually plenty. Don't marinate ground meats, see notes below.

When ready to begin drying, place a sheet of aluminum foil on the bottom of the oven to aid in cleanup. Drain meat in a colander and pat dry with paper towels (the drier the better at this point). Set oven at lowest temperature setting and carefully place meat slices directly onto oven racks. Leave the oven door open a crack to allow moisture to escape.

Drying times vary due to oven differences and meat size. Perfect jerky is firm and dry and not at all spongy. However, if your jerky is so dry it breaks in two easily, it's probably over-dried.

### **Instructions for For Ground Meat Jerky**

Look for meat that is 95% lean or leaner, such as ground beef, ground chuck, ground round or ground turkey meat. Double grind the meat with a spice mixture (recipe links below) to distribute the spices evenly (you might want to add a little extra salt, depending on the blend of your seasoning mixture). If you don't have a meat grinder, you can use a food processor for this process.

Sandwich some of the seasoned ground meat between two sheets of waxed paper. Use a rolling pin to press the meat into 2" wide, flat, thin strips. Carefully remove the strips from the waxed paper place directly on oven racks, as for sliced jerky. If desired, you can brush of thin layer of marinade on the strips at this point (not too much, you want the meat to dry). This is an optional step as the dry rub will provide a lot of flavor on its own. Recipes for dry spice rubs can be found in the related links.

**Jerky Tips:**

- It's easier to slice the meat thinly if it is slightly frozen
- Generally speaking, the leaner the meat, the better for jerky. Remove ALL visible fat!
- For peppery jerky, sprinkle with pepper right after placing on the drying rack. This pepper will "stick" to the jerky.

**Other Options**

- If you've ever been the proud recipient of one of those amazing Ronco Food Dehydrators you see touted on TV during the holidays, now is the time to haul it out. You can easily make jerky in it and avoid the oven.
- You can also dry jerky in a meat smoker (in this case, definitely eliminate the liquid smoke from the marinade recipe or your meat will taste like it has been in a fire). Mesquite works well for most meats. Also, be sure NOT to fill the smoker bowl with water or any other liquid. The point of making jerky is to DRY the meat.